

# **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

## **Introduction**

The City Council of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, in an effort to more fully involve its citizens on a direct and continuing basis, has developed the Citizen Participation Plan. The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires jurisdictions that receive their funds to adopt a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) that sets forth the jurisdiction's policies and procedures for citizen participation (24 CFR 91.1050). The City of Huntsville's CPP speaks specifically to activities and funds that the Community Development Department is responsible for administering. These grants/funds include, but are not limited to, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership Programs (HOME) funds, and all other HUD funds received by the City of Huntsville; all State of Alabama funds, including, but limited to Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) and Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds, and any other Federal or State funds administered by the City of Huntsville, Alabama's Community Development Department.

Annual entitlement grants are made to the City from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the purpose of addressing the needs of its citizens, specifically the city's low to moderate income residents. Through this Plan, citizens' involvement in the planning, and evaluation of, all Federal fund, CDBG, HOME, all other HUD funded activities, and all State of Alabama funded activities, administered by the Community Development Department, are administered through an open process in which the rights of Huntsville citizens are respected. Citizens are encouraged to participate in influencing decisions and obtaining support from local government officials on issues of community development matters.

The City of Huntsville desires and encourages the participation of all the citizens of the City of Huntsville, particularly low and moderate income residents of slum and blighted areas, low and moderate income residents of areas in which Federal and HUD funds, including, but not limited to, CDBG and HOME funds, and all State of Alabama funds, are proposed to be used, and by residents of all low and moderate income neighborhoods that at any given time are so defined by the City (Target Areas). In order to better utilize the provisions of this Plan, the City recommends the formation of neighborhood citizen committees.

## **Access to Information and Records**

The City, through its Community Development Department, offers citizens access to information and records relating to the City's proposed and actual use of all Federal and HUD funds, including, but not limited to, CDBG and HOME funds, and all State of Alabama funds. The City will make available to citizens, records regarding the past use of funds, the Citizen Participation Plan, the Consolidated Plan, the annual Action Plan, Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan, and the Consolidated Annual

Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). These records will be available to the public during regular working hours at the City of Huntsville's Community Development Department, located at 120 Holmes Street, East, Huntsville, Alabama, 35801. These records will be available for five years. If a citizen requires records outside of the five year window, a written request should be submitted to the Director.

## **Public Hearings**

The City will hold at least two public hearing to obtain the views of citizens, and to respond to proposals and questions on the City's housing and community development needs. These hearings will be held early in the planning process to allow citizens and community and neighborhood organizations an opportunity to make recommendations and comments on plan preparation. Notification of meetings related to the Consolidated Plan and the annual Action Plan will be made two weeks (14 days) before the public hearing date. These hearings will be held at a time and location convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries, with full accommodations for the handicapped. Official notice will be published in *The Huntsville Times*, and placed on the City of Huntsville's website located at <http://www.huntsvilleal.gov>. All public hearing locations will be wheelchair accessible and accommodations for sign interpretive services, and non-English speaking residents will be made available if requested one week in advance of meetings.

## **Publication of the Consolidated Plan and annual Action Plan**

The Consolidated Plan will be published and made available at the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, located at 915 Monroe Street, Huntsville, AL 35801 and also on the City's website located at <http://www.huntsvilleal.gov>. In an abbreviated form, the Executive Summary will describe the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan as well as identifying where an entire copy of the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan may be reviewed or copies personally obtained, as well as how to receive a copy by mail. Prior to the submission of the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan, the City will publish, in *The Huntsville Times*, and on the City's website, its proposed statement of community development activities and projected use of funds for that Program Year, so as to afford citizens an opportunity to examine the Consolidated Plan/Action Plans contents so that they can provide comments on the proposed Plan and on the City's Community Development Department's performance. Said publication will also include:

1. The estimated amount of all Federal and HUD funds, including, but not limited to CDBG and HOME funds, and all State of Alabama funds, proposed to be used for activities that will benefit low and moderate income persons;
2. The Consolidated Plan will include an Action Plan for the first program year of the Five Year Consolidated Plan. Each year thereafter, a one-year Annual Action Plan will be made available to the public. The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) will be completed following each program year. The Annual Action Plan and CAPER will be made available to the public for each program year in which the Consolidated Plan is in effect. In compliance with HUD regulations, the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan will have a 30-day comment period, and the CAPER will have a 15-day comment period. All Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan/Action

Plan will have a 30-day comment period. Public comment periods associated with all other Federal and State funds will follow the prescribed regulatory comment periods associated with their specific legislation.

### **Anti-Displacement**

As part of the implementation steps of the Consolidated Plan, the City will review all projects recommended for funding to identify those activities that will result in the displacement of residents. The City of Huntsville will comply with all requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act. This act, passed by Congress in 1970, is a federal law that establishes minimum standards for federally funded programs and projects that require the acquisition of real property (real estate) or displace persons from their homes, businesses, or farms. The Uniform Act's protections and assistance apply to the acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of real property for federal or federally funded projects. The City of Huntsville will take the needed steps to assure that the objectives of the URA are achieved where displacement activities are required. The URA objectives are:

- To provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects
- To ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement
- To ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary (DSS) housing is available within the displaced person's financial means
- To help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing, and
- To encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.

### **Technical Assistance**

The City will provide technical advisory assistance to groups which are representative of low and moderate income persons that request assistance in developing proposals. The City will also provide technical assistance to neighborhood citizen committees, neighborhood advisory committees, civic groups, and individual citizens in understanding the CDBG program requirements, policies, and regulations governing the CDBG Entitlement program. The City will also provide technical assistance to these same groups on any other Federal or State funded programs administered by the Community Development Department.

### **Complaint Procedure**

Any citizen or group of citizens, with specific complaints, regarding any part of the implementation of any Federal or State funded programs administered by the Community Development Department has the right to submit a written complaint through specified

channels. Written complaints will be responded to in writing within 15 working days from the data received by the Community Development Department.

- 1.) Any person or group that is aggrieved by an action or proposal related to activities involving Federal, HUD, or State funded activities administered by the Community Development Department, shall first make their complaint known to the Community Development Department. Written complaints should be submitted to:

Michelle Gilliam Jordan, AICP  
Community Development Director  
City of Huntsville  
P. O. Box 308  
Huntsville, Alabama 35804  
(256) 427-5400

- 2.) If the aggrieved person or group does not obtain satisfactory results from written complaint to the Director, then an appeal may be made to the local governing body through the Office of the Mayor:

Tommy Battle, Mayor  
City of Huntsville  
P. O. Box 308  
Huntsville, Alabama 35804  
(256) 427-5000

- 3.) If the aggrieved person or group desires to carry a complaint forward from the local governing body they may contact:

U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Birmingham Office  
Region IV  
Medical Forum Building, Suite 900  
950 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, North  
Birmingham, Alabama 35203-5301  
(205) 745-4340  
Attn: Charles Franklin, Community Planning and Development Director

### **Substantial Amendments**

The City of Huntsville will amend its Consolidated Plan and or Action Plan whenever it decides not to carry out an activity described in the Consolidated Plan and or Action Plan, or decides to carry out an activity not previously described, or decides to substantially change the purpose, scope, location, beneficiaries, or budgeted dollar amount of an activity. Any new project or change to existing activities over \$350,000.00, or as noted above, any changes in the purpose, scope, location and beneficiaries, will constitute a substantial amendment.

Prior to amending its Consolidated Plan and or Action Plan, the City will provide citizens with reasonable notice of, and an opportunity to comment on such proposed amendments, by publication in *The Huntsville Times*, and on the City's website, at least 30 days prior to amendment by the City. The City will make available to the public, and will submit to HUD, or any other applicable agency, a description of amendments adopted.

### **Performance Report**

Citizens will be given a comment period of 15 days to provide input on the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). Comments may be submitted to the staff member identified under the "Complaint Procedures" section of this Citizen Participation Plan.

This Citizen Participation Plan shall apply to all Federal and HUD funds, including, but not limited to, Community Development Block Grant and HOME Partnership Act Entitlement activities, and State of Alabama funded activities, that are on-going as of the adoption of said Plan, as well as all future activities.

This Plan shall remain in effect from its adoption date, and until all activities assisted by any and all funds listed above. Including, but not limited to the CDBG and HOME Partnership Act Entitlement programs are completed, or until it is superseded by a new or amended Citizen Participation Plan.